

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 118024
ORIGIN SS-15

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DRAFTED BY: S/P:MASPIEGEL
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S/S:SESTEINER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE NIACT IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS FOR TONY LAKE, VP'S PARTY

FOLLOWING REPEAT LUSAKA 1305 ACTION SECSTATE
CAPE TOWN LISBON LONDON NAIROBI GENEVA
WHITE HOUSE INFO PRETORIA DTD 15 MAY

QTE

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EXDIS
GENEVA FOR S/S
NAIROBI FOR AMBASSADOR LOW

WHITE HOUSE FOR BRZEZINSKI

LISBON FOR LAKE, SXP WITH VICE PRESIDENT'S PARTY

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR RH SF US UK ZA
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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 118024

SUBJ: MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT CARTER TO PRESIDENT KAUNDA

REF: (A) LUSAKA 1303; (B) STATE 110995

SUMMARY: MESSAGE (REFTEL B) DELIVERED TO MARK CHONA
FOR IMMEDIATE REFERRAL TO PRESIDENT KAUNDA 10:30 A.M.
MAY 15. CHONA SAID KAUNDA

WOULD BE MOST APPRECIATIVE OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S RESPONSE, ESPECIALLY EXPEDITIOUS WAY IT WAS HANDLED. HE CONTRASTED RAPID PRESIDENT CARTER RESPONSE WITH SLOWNESS OF BRITISH WHO HAVE STILL NOT REPLIED TO KAUNDA'S REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION AS TO WHETHER PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN HAD ENDORSED OWEN'S MESSAGE WARNING OF SMITH'S THREAT (REFTEL A). CHONA SPELLED OUT LIKELY KAUNDA NEXT STEPS, IF HE DOES NOT GET A SATISFACTORY RESPONSE FROM THE BRITISH, AS: (1) LETTING IT BE KNOWN THAT USE OF LUSAKA AS A BASE OF OPERATIONS FOR THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP WOULD NOT BE WELCOME; AND (2) REFUSAL BY KAUNDA TO ATTEND COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE. CHARGE URGED IMPORTANCE OF CONSULTATIVE GROUP APPROACH AND SPECIFICALLY ASKED IF KAUNDA WAS DISTANCING HIMSELF FROM INTENDED NEGOTIATIONS. CHONA RESPONDED, NO, RATHER THE PRESIDENT WAS SAYING HE MIGHT HAVE TO DECIDE THAT IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE IN THE PRESENT CONTEXT OF BRITISH-ZAMBIAN RELATIONS TO HAVE A BRITISH-LED CONSULTATIVE GROUP BASED IN AND OPERATING OUT OF LUSAKA. WE HAVE SHARED CHONA'S REMARKS WITH BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION AND HAVE URGED THE NEED FOR A RAPID RESPONSE FROM CALLAGHAN TO KAUNDA'S LETTER. THEY ALREADY HAD SO URGED ON BASIS OF MY CONTACT YESTERDAY (REFTEL A).
END SUMMARY.

1. CHONA SAID PRESIDENT KAUNDA WOULD BE MOST APPRECIATIVE OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S MESSAGE. IT WOULD BE PASSED IMMEDIATELY TO KAUNDA. HE CONTRASTED FAVORABLY THE RAPIDITY WITH WHICH PRESIDENT CARTER HAD RESPONDED TO THE SLOWNESS OF THE BRITISH. KAUNDA HAS STILL NOT RECEIVED A RESPONSE TO HIS LETTER TO CALLAGHAN, ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT CALLAGHAN HAD ENDORSED OWEN'S MESSAGE WARNING OF SMITH'S THREAT.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 118024

2. AFTER READING THE LETTER A SECOND TIME, CHONA FOCUSED ON THE PARAGRAPH STATING U.S. WAS UNAWARE OF SOUTH AFRICAN INVOLVEMENT IN RHODESIAN MILITARY PLANNING. HE SAID INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO STATE HOUSE, WHOSE SOURCE WAS HIGH LEVEL SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY MAN, LEFT NO DOUBT ABOUT SOUTH AFRICAN INVOLVEMENT. NOT ONLY WAS SOUTH AFRICA INVOLVED IN PLANNING ATTACKS ON MOZAMBIQUE, BUT WAS HELPING TO PAY FOR THESE OPERATIONS AS WELL.

3. I STRESSED THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE WORK OF THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP AS THE NEXT STEP IN MOVING TOWARDS A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA. IT WAS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT PRESIDENT KAUNDA SHARED OUR VIEW; WAS HE NOW, BECAUSE OF HIS DIFFICULTY WITH THE BRITISH, DISTANCING HIMSELF FROM THE NEGOTIATIONS APPROACH? CHONA HASTILY ASSURED ME THIS WAS NOT KAUNDA'S INTENTION. KAUNDA WAS FIRMLY WEDDED TO SUPPORTING NEGOTIATIONS WHICH SHOWED ANY PROMISE OF HELPING TO RESOLVE THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM. HOWEVER,

GIVEN THE OWEN COMMUNICATION FROM SMITH AND THE FAILURE OF THE BRITISH TO CLARIFY THE POSITION OF CALLAGHAN IN THE TRANSMISSION OF THAT MESSAGE, KAUNDA MIGHT BE COMPELLED TO TAKE STEPS. THE FIRST STEP BEING CONTEMPLATED IS FOR KAUNDA TO LET IT BE KNOWN THAT HE DOES NOT BELIEVE IT APPROPRIATE FOR THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP TO BASE ITSELF IN LUSAKA. THE SECOND COULD BE AN ANNOUNCEMENT THAT KAUNDA WOULD NOT ATTEND THE COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE IN LONDON. IF THE BRITISH INSISTED ON GOING AHEAD WITH BASING THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP IN LUSAKA OVER KAUNDA'S OBJECTIONS, LIFE COULD BE MADE DIFFICULT FOR ITS MEMBERS. FOR EXAMPLE, MOVEMENT OF ALL CHARTER AIRCRAFT FROM ZAMBIA TO SALISBURY COULD BE BANNED. IN ANY EVENT IT MIGHT NOT BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP TO BE BASED IN LUSAKA IF, AS INDICATED BY SMITH'S THREAT, ZAMBIA MIGHT BE ENGULFED BY WAR.

4. CHONA SPELLED OUT THE ASPECT OF OWEN'S MESSAGE ON SMITH'S THREAT WHICH HAD PARTICULARLY GALLED KAUNDA. THIS WAS THE PASSAGE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 118024

WHICH READ, "I HAVE REPLIED TO MR. SMITH SIMPLY SAYING I HAVE DRAWN HIS REMARKS TO YOUR ATTENTION." KAUNDA FOUND IT HIGHLY OFFENSIVE AND SIGNIFICANT THAT, INSTEAD OF WARNING SMITH NOT TO LAUNCH A PREEMPTIVE ATTACK AGAINST ZAMBIA, OWEN "SIMPLY" PASSED ON THE MESSAGE. THIS FAILURE ON THE PART OF THE BRITISH TO EVEN WARN THEIR "REBEL COLONY" NOT TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST ZAMBIA WAS MOST DISTURBING.

5. KAUNDA, SAID CHONA, ALSO WAS CONCERNED BY RECENT STATEMENTS BY OWEN WHICH SEEMED TO INDICATE THAT OWEN WAS PRESSING FOR THE IMMEDIATE CESSATION OF THE ARMED STRUGGLE. THIS APPROACH WAS IN CONTRADICTION WITH WHAT OWEN HAD TOLD KAUNDA DURING HIS VISIT TO LUSAKA. FURTHER, IT WAS NOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH KAUNDA'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE U.S. POSITION. KAUNDA THOUGHT IT HAD BEEN MADE CLEAR THAT THE ARMED STRUGGLE WOULD CONTINUE WHILE NEGOTIATIONS WENT ON. WHAT WAS THE SIGNIFICANCE, CHONA ASKED, OF THIS NEW LINE BEING ADVANCED BY OWEN?

6. I HAVE PASSED TO BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION CHONA'S REMARKS AND URGED THAT THEY ENCOURAGE A RAPID RESPONSE FROM CALLAGHAN TO KAUNDA. I POINTED OUT TO THE BRITISH HOW SERIOUSLY KAUNDA REGARDED THE PHRASE ABOUT "SIMPLY" PASSING ON INFORMATION FROM SMITH AND HIS CONCERN OVER OWEN STATEMENTS WHICH APPEAR TO BE A CALL FOR THE CESSATION OF THE ARMED STRUGGLE. HIGH COMMISSION YESTERDAY HAD, ON THE BASIS OF MY CONVERSATION WITH ITS OFFICIALS, SEND AN URGENT RECOMMENDATION TO LONDON THAT A CALLAGHAN REPLY BE SENT. THE BRITISH DCM TODAY PROMISED TO GET ANOTHER MESSAGE TO LONDON NOTING POINTS ABOUT OWEN "SIMPLY" PASSING MESSAGE FROM SMITH AND ZAMBIA'S CONCERN OVER HIS STATEMENTS URGING CESSATION OF ARMED STRUGGLE.

7. COMMENT: KAUNDA IS IN A CLASSIC DILEMMA; HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE NEGOTIATIONS PROCESS GO FORWARD IF IT OFFERS ANY CHANCE OF PRODUCING A SETTLEMENT. HE DOES NOT WANT TO JEOPARDIZE THE CHANCES FOR FORWARD MOVEMENT. HOWEVER, HIS FEELING OF BITTERNESS AND RESENTMENT OVER WHAT HE CONSIDERS ILL-ADVISED TREATMENT BY

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 STATE 118024

THE BRITISH IS LEADING HIM TOWARDS MAKING DECISIONS WHICH COULD WEAKEN THE CHANCES OF NEGOTIATIONS SUCCEEDING. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT HE HAS NOT BACKED OFF FROM GOING FORWARD WITH THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP APPROACH. HE IS SAYING GO AHEAD WITH THAT GROUP'S WORK, BUT WE MAY NOT WANT IT BASED IN LUSAKA. I BELIEVE A SATISFACTORY RESPONSE FROM CALLAGHAN HAS A CHANCE OF GETTING KAUNDA'S APPROACH TO THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP BACK ON THE RAILS.
CLINGERMAN UNQTE VANCE

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